

but for those who respond to the appeal of dramatically shorter cooking times for a wide range of dishes this book would be an excellent guide for all but complete kitchen novices. Catherine Phipps is an experienced cook and foodwriter with work to be found on the *Guardian Word of Mouth* feature, and the review pages of *Fire and Knives*. She writes engagingly and promotes confidence with the attractively presented and clearly laid out recipe pages, together with a selection of coloured illustrations. The practical details of managing the cooker are lucidly explained and there are useful background comments and notes to most of the recipes. These range widely, from meat and fish, to beans and pulses, vegetables and puddings and even preserves, and draw on a wide variety of cuisines.

JENNIFER STOREY

Rachel Cooke: *Her Brilliant Career: Ten Extraordinary Women of the Fifties*: Virago, 2013: 326 pp., hardback, £18.99.

This last review was intended to be merely a brief note to register the existence of its first chapter, the subject of which is Patience Gray. However, the book was so appetizing that I ate it at a single meal. So I can do no more than recommend the whole. Rachel Cooke is a journalist whose interviews have ever been readable, in the *Observer* mostly. She has excelled herself with this book which will bring back to mind figures and characters, connections and tendencies, long since forgotten. She writes clearly, intelligently, evocatively, and amusingly. An excellent Christmas present.